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Court ruling threatens Mumia Abu-Jamal's life

Evidence to prove his innocence still unheard

By Monica Moorehead

On June 29, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit lifted its stay of proceedings in the case of death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and ordered a briefing on this matter. Robert R. Bryan, his lead attorney, says: "This should be a wake-up call to the movement. Mumia's case is now moving forward. He is in extremely grave danger. The authorities want to silence his voice and pen."

Mumia Abu-Jamal is one victim among millions who have been exploited and oppressed by the anti-poor, unjust U.S. criminal justice system. The significance of his case, however, goes beyond his struggle against a racist judicial frame-up. Despite being physically isolated on death row, Abu-Jamal has used his words and audio commentaries to provide a powerful, distinct voice in the worldwide movement against imperialist war in Iraq and occupation in Palestine, Haiti and Afghanistan.

The circuit court had been awaiting a U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of Beard v. Banks, which will lead to Mumia's execution if the prosecution has its way.

Bryan explains the significance of this complicated ruling: "The Supreme Court ruled on the appeal by Pennsylvania state authorities stemming from a Court of Appeals decision that invalidated the death sentence of George Banks, who has been on death row over 20 years for multiple murder. Mr. Banks' death sentence had been overturned by the Court of Appeals on the grounds that the instructions to the jury in Banks' case violated a Supreme Court ruling which held that jurors did not have to agree unanimously on the existence of mitigating circumstances in order to vote against the death penalty. The key issue in the Banks case was whether another case, Mills v. Maryland, 486 U.S. 367, decided in 1988, could be applied retroactively. The Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit had ruled that Mills was retroactive and therefore applied to Banks, which became final in 1987.

"In Mumia's case retroactivity regarding Banks/Mills was not an issue, since Mumia's proceeding was technically finalized in 1990 and therefore was fully covered by Mills. ... The U.S. Supreme Court reversed a critical portion of the Banks case on retroactivity, which held as unconstitutional capital sentencing schemes that require juries to disregard mitigating factors not found unanimously.

"The Supreme Court ruled that Mills did not apply retroactively. The court determined that the Banks conviction became final in 1987; thus, the 1988 Mills decision did not affect his case even though what had occurred was unconstitutional. Hence, Mr. Banks and some 30 other Pennsylvania death row inmates similarly situated could not benefit from the Mills decision and their original death penalty judgments must stand."

This crucial decision comes after more than four years of federal appeals. U.S. Federal District Judge William Yohn was assigned to Abu-Jamal's case in October 1999. He was charged with determining whether Abu-Jamal should have an evidentiary hearing and new trial. Such a hearing would have allowed evidence that had been suppressed to finally be heard and entered into court record. That would give Abu-Jamal a chance to prove his innocence in the 1981 killing of Phila-

delphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

Yohn issued a ruling on Dec. 18, 2001, that threw out the original death sentence for Mumia Abu-Jamal resulting from his 1982 trial. But Yohn upheld Abu-Jamal's conviction on the charge that he shot Faulkner. If Yohn's ruling had not been challenged within 180 days, Abu-Jamal would have gone through a new penalty trial that could have brought about either life imprisonment or, again, the death penalty.

The Philadelphia District Attorney's office, hoping to see Mumia executed, appealed Yohn's ruling. This led to the current ruling by the Third Circuit Court.

Attorney Bryan has appealed to the public: "The government knows that the only way to stop Mumia is to murder him in the name of the law, to execute him. In over three decades of litigating death-penalty cases, I have not seen one in

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WW PHOTO: BETSEY PIETTE

Some of the 68 unionists, students and community organizers killed in Barranquilla by paramilitaries.

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Marlon Brando

A great actor who stood against racism

By Monica Moorehead

A number of well-known actors have come under media and government attacks because of their progressive stances against war and racism. They include Danny Glover, Susan Sarandon, Woody Harrelson, Martin Sheen and Sean Penn.

Marlon Brando, who died July 1 at age 80, was the target of similar attacks more than a generation ago. In fact, he should be forever memorialized for his passionate concern for social justice as much as for taking method acting to unprecedented heights.

Many of Brando's roles and films did not reflect what bourgeois critics might call his liberal politics.

He appeared in a reactionary, anti-union movie, "On the Waterfront." Some of the films he starred in were insensitive to women. Not a Latin@, he nevertheless portrayed the legendary Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata in the 1952 film "Viva Zapata," which would understandably outrage the Latin@ community and their supporters. As an activist, he made the unfortunate choice of supporting the Zionist state of Israel, not the Palestinians.

But he also appeared in "Quemada" or "Burn," a progressive, anti-slavery movie.

Despite these contradictions, and more, Brando was considered a rebel on and off the screen. The press labeled him "eccentric," mainly for being anti-Hollywood and anti-establishment. But he didn't seem to care. He didn't believe in competition among actors for awards. He admitted that acting for him was a vehicle for making a living, for making a lot of money.

In his 1994 autobiography, "Brando—Songs My Mother Taught Me," he explains: "Except for moral and political issues that aroused in me a desire to speak out, I have done my utmost throughout my life, for the sake of my children and myself, to remain silent. ... But now, in my 70th year, I have decided to tell the story of my life ... so that my children can separate the truth from the myths that others have created about me, as myths are created about everyone swept up in the turbulent and distorting maelstrom of celebrity in our culture."

Impact of civil rights movement

Brando was schooled as an adolescent in a military academy, but came out against the U.S. war in Vietnam. In his autobiography, he reflects about the civil-rights movement's great influence on his life. A number of actors, including Brando, participated in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery, Ala., march and attended the historic 1963 March on Washington where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made his famous "I Have a Dream" remarks.

At a civil-rights march in Torrance, Calif., in 1963, Brando was verbally singled out by racists.

There were not too many celebrities who supported the Black Panther Party, but Brando was one of the most prominent, along with composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein. Brando wrote about his 1968 meeting with Panther leaders Kathleen Cleaver and Eldridge Cleaver and 17-year-old Bobby Hutton, the first Panther murdered by Oakland police. Brando attended Hutton's funeral.

"Those Panthers made me realize how protected my life had been as a white person, and how, despite a lifetime



Marlon Brando attends 1968 funeral of martyred Black Panther Bobby Hutton.

of searching, curiosity and empathy, I would never understand what it was like to be Black," he wrote. Brando, along with actor Sean Penn, openly supported Panther Geronimo Ji Jaga (aka Pratt), who was imprisoned for 27 years, before his release in 1997.

For many years, Brando denounced the U.S. government for its racist treatment of Indigenous peoples. A longtime friend of Brando's, columnist James Bacon, remarked on CNN's "Larry King Live" on July 2 that Brando would slowly rewind John Wayne's reactionary films to see Native people win the battles against the Cavalry.

In 1973, Brando refused to attend the Academy Awards ceremony to accept his second Oscar in protest of Hollywood's racist portrayal of Native peoples.

His March 30 speech for that occasion reads in part, "For 200 years we have said to the Indian people who are fighting for their land, their life, their families and their right to be free: 'Lay down your arms, my friends, and then we will remain together. Only if you lay down your arms, my friends, can we then talk of peace and come to an agreement which will be good for you.'

"When they laid down their arms, we murdered them. ... We cheated them out of their lands. We starved them into signing fraudulent agreements that we called treaties which we never kept.

"It's hard enough for children to grow up in this world. When Indian children watch television, and they watch films, and when they see their race depicted as they are in films, their minds become injured in ways we can never know."

In 1992, Brando asked that his name be removed from the credits of the movie "Christopher Columbus—The Discovery" because the final movie version did not expose the genocide of the Indigenous peoples. (MSNBC)

Over 40 years ago, Brando supported the struggle led by the Puyallup Native nation in Washington state for fishing rights.

Upon hearing of Brando's death, SuZan Satiacum, whose late husband Chief Bob Satiacum was arrested along with Brando for defending these rights, commented: "Marlon Brando was the first person of non-color to step forward to help us. Marlon Brando was ahead of his time. ... We named the place where he was arrested 'Brando's Landing.' And it's still that name yet." (Seattle Post-Intelligencer Reporter, July 3) □

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WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Fri., July 16

Hear Rebeca Toledo reporting on recent trade union trip to Colombia. Young Hui Kim on a recent trip to South Korea. Sponsored by International Action Center. 7:30 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. \$5 donation, no one turned away for lack of funds. At 5274 W. Pico Blvd. #203. For info (323) 936-7266

NEW YORK

Fri., July 9

Workers World Party meeting: Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, will discuss how the Iraqi resistance is challenging U.S. imperialist domination of the Middle East. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30.) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

Workers World

55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 46, No. 28 • July 15, 2004
Closing date: July 7, 2004

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson

Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, Pat Chin, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez

Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Adrian Garcia, Maggie Vascassenno

Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Carlos Vargas

Internet: Janet Mayes

Workers World-WW (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

Selected articles are available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to wwnews-on@wwpublish.com.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World-WW, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

JOIN US. Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.
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National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, N.Y. 10011
(212) 627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, Ga. 30301
(404) 235-5704

Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, Md. 21218
(410) 235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Armory St., Boston,
Mass. 02130
(617) 983-3835;
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
P.O. Box 1204
Buffalo NY 14213
(716) 566-1115
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
P.O. Box 06178, Wacker
Drive Station, Chicago,
Ill. 60606
(773) 381-5839;
Fax (773) 761-9330;
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
phone (216) 531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, Mich. 48202
(313) 831-0750;
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 130322,
Houston, Texas
77219 (713) 861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5274 West Pico Blvd.,
Suite 203
Los Angeles, Calif. 90019
(323) 936-1416
la@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, Pa. 19139
(610) 453-0490;
phila@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, Va. 23221
richmond@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
2117 Buffalo Rd., P.M.B.
303, Rochester, N.Y. 14624
(716) 436-6458;
San Diego, Calif.
3930 Oregon St., Suite 230
San Diego, Calif. 92104
(619) 692-4496

San Francisco
3288 21st St. #196
San Francisco, Calif.
94110
(415) 561-9752
sf@workers.org

Seattle
1218 E. Cherry #201,
Seattle, Wash. 98122
(206) 325-0085;
seattle@workers.org

State College, Pa.
100 Grandview Rd.,
State College,
Pa. 16801
(814) 237-8695

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org



L.A. communities unite against police brutality

By Chuck Anderson
Los Angeles

Responding to incidents of police terror and brutality, the International Action Center, along with labor leaders, local clergy, anti-war and immigrant rights activists, held a press conference/public rally on July 1 in front of the LAPD Parker Command Center in solidarity with the African American and Latino communities.

On June 13th, Stanley Miller, a 36-year-old Black man, had been beaten in a life-threatening manner by the LAPD. News helicopters filmed the beating.

John Hatfield, a seven-year police veteran, was seen kicking Miller in the head after he had surrendered and was on his knees, being held down by numerous other officers. Hatfield landed 11 poten-

tially fatal blows with a metal flashlight to Miller's body and possibly his head.

As many at the press conference stated, this was not an isolated incident of police brutality. Days earlier, an unarmed young man on foot was accosted by police in the community of Bell and shot to death. The officer's story was that the suspect kicked the gun out of his hand, picked it up and pointed it at him, so the cop killed him with a back-up gun. There were no witnesses.

Speakers at the press conference included Linda Hinton from Parents Against Lynching; Rev. Richard Byrd from KRST Unity Center for African Spirituality; Mollie Bell, layperson at Faith United Methodist Church; and John Parker and Adrian Garcia representing the International Action Center.

Los Angeles Police Chief William

Bratton, formerly New York's top cop under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, has brought a new wave of racist brutality against innocent victims to this city. People are reminded of the fatal choking of young Latino Anthony Baez and the killing of unarmed African immigrant Amadou Diallo, who was shot 41 times by New York undercover cops.

Bratton has recently made racist com-

ments, calling a Black community leader a "nitwit" and referring to African American youth as "tribal thugs and terrorists."

The International Action Center has called on all progressive organizations to demand an end to police terror with an emergency demonstration on July 10 at 1:00 p.m. The march and rally, starting at 108th & Main at the Southeast Precincts, will demand justice for Stanley Miller. □

Court ruling threatens Mumia's life

Continued from page 1

which the government wants so badly to kill a client. We must not rest until Mumia is free."

Bryan is awaiting a ruling on a petition he filed in the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia concerning new evidence of innocence and prosecutorial misconduct during Mumia's original trial. Bryan will also be filing a petition in the U.S. District Court regarding a statement made by Judge Albert Sabo during Abu-Jamal's trial. Court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter has signed a legal affidavit saying she overheard Sabo say about Abu-Jamal: "Yeah, and I'm going to help 'em fry the n—r."

The political movement must be ready to mobilize in the streets to demand Abu-Jamal's freedom. Twice when Tom Ridge—now head of the federal Department of Homeland Security—was governor of Pennsylvania, he tried to legally lynch this revolutionary journalist and former Black Panther. Both times, in August 1995 and October 1999, Abu-Jamal's supporters turned out in the thousands to stop his execution.

The powers-that-be want to forever silence him because of his belief in worldwide social revolution. That is why the movement must use every avenue to free him. □

Victims of police violence demand justice

In Brooklyn one year ago, police brutally attacked a Puerto Rican family, the Acostas, during a Fourth of July barbecue in front of their building. The police were supposedly responding to a noise complaint. Eight family members were injured during this police assault. They included Margarita Acosta, now 63 years old (right), and her 12-year-old grandson, Darrell.

Margarita Acosta and four other family members face felony and misdemeanor charges. Their trials have been delayed for more than a year. The family believes it is because the New York Police Department and the Brooklyn district attorney's office have no evidence to convict them. Jose Acosta is now scheduled to go to trial on July 8.

On July 4, a rally was held at the site of the police assault. Brooklyn City Councilperson Charles Barron, a candidate for mayor in 2005, demanded justice for the Acosta family and all victims of police brutality.

—Photo and story by Anne Pruden



New book honors Black Panther Party

By Sue Harris

"We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party," by Mumia Abu-Jamal (South End Press, 2004, 264 pages, \$18)

Mumia Abu-Jamal joined the Black Panther Party's Philadelphia chapter in 1969 at age 15. His recent book "We Want Freedom" gives a firsthand description of the party, written with the revolutionary movement in mind. His book should be viewed within the context of the ongoing Black liberation struggle inside the United States and also the struggle for national liberation worldwide.

Abu-Jamal recounts the slavery of African peoples in the Americas. He includes Olaudah Equiano's excruciating narrative of the Middle Passage, revolts on the slave ships, Little George and William and the "massive armed rebellions that echo down the corridors of time for their sheer boldness in attempt and execution of their will to be once and forever free." (p. 19) He writes eloquently of those who fought against U.S. slavery, including Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, Gabriel Prosser and Denmark Vesey.

Abu-Jamal traces the BPP's development through the burgeoning social awareness of its founders, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, and other Panther leaders in the early 1960s. He includes their Southern roots, blended with urban experiences, and their discovery of not only Malcolm X but Frantz Fanon, an anti-

colonialist writer in Algeria, and the worldwide anti-imperialist revolutions.

Abu-Jamal explains the significance of community survival programs like the Free Breakfast for Children Program, People's Free Medical Research Health Clinic, Free Clothing Program and many more, showing the deep ties that the Panthers had in the Black community. He quotes Huey Newton on the survival programs: "They were designed to help the people survive until their consciousness is raised, which is only the first step in the revolution to produce a new America" (Huey Newton: "To Die for the People")

The Panthers believed in armed self-defense to counter the state-sanctioned police terror Black people were subjected to.

Abu-Jamal discusses the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention hosted by the Panthers in 1970 in Philadelphia as an attempt to build a multi-national, multi-gender party recognizing the leadership of the most oppressed, which most of the so-called white left were not yet willing to accept. He stresses the importance

of the Panthers' international section in Algeria, led by Eldridge Cleaver, establishing the BPP as "a bona fide revolutionary organization of global import." (page 115)

At the same time, he describes the Panther organization from the "bottom up." He writes vividly about the daily life of the average Panther, using his own experiences as well as that of others. He gives a hilarious accounting of himself as a 16-year-old getting arrested for selling the Panther newspaper, and calling home to tell his mother he was in California. He also describes falling asleep on guard duty at the Panther office.

Abu-Jamal gives special attention to the significance of women in the BPP leadership. He deconstructs the myth about the "misogynistic" Panthers by using the writings of many Panther women including the late Safiya Bukhari, Afeni Shakur and the now exiled Assata Shakur to make his point without denying the problems of sexism that existed within the organization.

Abu-Jamal, who has been in

WE WANT FREEDOM:

A Life in the Black Panther Party by Mumia Abu-Jamal

An exacting and luminous history of the Philadelphia Black Panther Party and of the most important groups in the ongoing struggle for the liberation of African-Americans.

Abu-Jamal, known to the world as a wrongly convicted political prisoner held for 22 years in Pennsylvania's death row. The list cost of this book is \$18.00 but at leftbooks.com it's 20% off, only \$13.99.



prison since 1981, exposes the impact that the FBI's COINTELPRO—short for counter-intelligence programs—had on the BPP. Panther martyrs like Fred Hampton, Bunchy Carter and Jon Huggins are mentioned. He documents how COINTELPRO carried out assassinations, using infiltrators recruited and directed by the FBI along with their counterparts in the local and state police.

Abu-Jamal describes the role that COINTELPRO played in the split between the East Coast and West Coast branches of the Black Panther Party. He offers a brilliant, dispassionate analysis of the leadership of both sides, without rancor but with revolutionary objectivity and understanding. He provides a blueprint of how the split was arranged and also a roadmap that should be helpful to future generations to avoid the traps that were set.

Last, he offers commentary on the later offshoots of the BPP, including the Black Liberation Army, the New Black Panther Party and many more. He ends with a listing of former BPP members today, always in the context of the ongoing struggle.

"We Want Freedom" is an inspiration. It is an incredible revolutionary document, brilliantly researched and written. This book is further proof that Mumia Abu-Jamal, although isolated in a cell on Pennsylvania's death row for more than 22 years, has not let the repressive, racist state silence his defiant voice on the need for struggle and revolution. It is a must read for every revolutionary of all ages. □

Women workers sue Wal-Mart:

'Pay the billion you owe us'

By Mary Owen

The glass ceiling at Wal-Mart showed cracks last month when a sex discrimination lawsuit by six California women who work or have worked for the \$256 billion retail giant received class action status. In a case that began last year, the workers charged Wal-Mart with systematically discriminating against women in pay and promotions.

Two thirds of Wal-Mart's 1.2 million U.S. workers are women.

On June 22, U.S. District Court Judge Martin Jenkins certified the gender-bias lawsuit, *Dukes v. Wal-Mart*, to cover more than 1.6 million current and former female employees of Wal-Mart's 3,586 U.S. retail stores back to Dec. 26, 1998. The ruling includes its discount stores, super centers, neighborhood stores and Sam's Clubs.

"I'm in this for the long haul. I have no fear in my spirit at all of Wal-Mart," lead plaintiff Betty Dukes told the *New York Times*. (June 23) Dukes, a 54-year-old African-American woman and an ordained Missionary Baptist minister, decided to take action after seeing men promoted over her during 10 years at Wal-Mart in Pittsburgh, Calif.

The workers' lawyers say this is the biggest class action ever certified against a private employer. The historic legal action by women workers could force Wal-Mart to award more than \$1 billion in back pay alone—the difference between what Wal-Mart underpaid the women and what they should have earned since 1998.

Systematic gender bias

Statistics supporting the gender-bias lawsuit—available at www.walmartclass.com and www.walmartwomen.com—show a systematic pattern of discrimination by Wal-Mart against women workers.

Women were regularly paid less than men for the same work—from 5 to 15 percent less in similar positions. Although 65 percent of Wal-Mart's hourly workers are women, only one-third of its managers are female—well below industry norms. Men hold 90 percent of Wal-Mart store manager positions.

Wal-Mart tried to argue that it had no national policy against women. But expert testimony in the case showed gender-based wage disparities exist in every region in which Wal-Mart operates.

Wal-Mart's practices are so anti-woman that the National Organization for

Women dubbed Wal-Mart its "Merchant of Shame" in its Women Friendly Workplace campaign in 2002. (www.now.org)

Labor, women and communities unite

The gender-bias class action lawsuit comes on the heels of a number of labor and community campaigns and legal actions against the anti-union behemoth.

Wal-Mart pays workers a miserly \$8 an hour on average—without benefits—while topping the Fortune 500 as the biggest private employer in the United States.

In February, a Portland, Ore., federal jury found that Wal-Mart owed 70 store managers overtime pay after forcing them to clock out and then work for free. Similar cases are pending in 31 states.

Federal raids last year, which forced hundreds of undocumented workers from their jobs, revealed that Wal-Mart used cleaning subcontractors that exploited immigrant workers.

The Food and Commercial Workers union is continuing efforts to organize Wal-Mart workers in the United States and Canada—where workers at a Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Wal-Mart recently signed up to join the union.

"An organized voice for workers is the solution for the problems—from low pay to inadequate health care, from high turnover to discrimination—at Wal-Mart. The Dukes case is an inspiration for all other Wal-Mart workers that, acting together, they, too, can bring change to the work place," said Food and Commercial Workers President Joe Hansen.

The union also joined community groups in Chicago and in Inglewood, Calif., to prevent Wal-Mart from setting up low-wage, big-box stores in those cities. And it is publicizing the women's gender-bias case on its web site at www.ufcw.org.

In June the Service Employees union joined the fight, pledging \$1 million at its annual convention to "work with national and local groups to pressure Wal-Mart to improve wages and working conditions and to be a better neighbor."

Meanwhile, the gender-bias case against Wal-Mart is making an impact on working-class shoppers like Debra Enah of Minneapolis-St. Paul. "I don't want to be part of a store that doesn't have a heart for women," she told the *Star Tribune*. "Women do most of the shopping here. They could lose a great deal of customers." □

ON THE PICKET LINE

SEIU: Stop occupation, withdraw troops

The Service Employees, the biggest U.S. union with 1.7 million members, voted unanimously at its national convention June 22 to pass a resolution calling for the United States to end the occupation of Iraq and bring the troops home safely.

The final resolution, based on language submitted by nine locals, linked military intervention abroad with attacks on workers at home. It charged the Bush administration, backed by a majority in Congress, with responsibility for declining wages and benefits, de-unionization, cuts in public services, crumbling health care and educational systems, cuts in veterans' benefits, escalating public debt, and eroding economic, social and personal security.

The resolution stated, "We cannot solve these economic and social problems without addressing U.S. foreign policy and its consequences."

The Service Employees became the first national union to tie domestic issues to international policy and take an official stand against the war in Iraq. A few days later the Federal, State, County and Municipal Employees—AFSCME—passed a resolution demanding, "Bring the troops home now."

To make these resolutions more than paper documents, both unions need to mobilize their members to protest outside the upcoming Democratic and Republican conventions. Thousands of angry unionists demanding an end to war, demanding universal free health care, higher wages and many other workers' rights would strike fear in the ruling-class backers of both parties.

Black workers win at U.S. Pipe

All current and former Black workers, going back to 1998, at U.S. Pipe and Foundry will share a \$6.5 million settlement of a federal job discrimination case. As part of the settlement—which will go to workers in the company's plants in Alabama, Tennessee and New Jersey—U.S. Pipe agreed to set up a fairness advisory council, share job openings with all employees and train supervisors not to discriminate.

Given that the company is based in Birmingham, Ala., this victory can be viewed as part of the ongoing struggle of African American workers against racist discrimination rooted in slavery and segregation. The fact that the company agreed to expand tuition reimbursement for vocational training and provide training for workers who want to move into management and supervisory positions can be viewed as a form of long-overdue reparations.



Grocery workers

A strike by 25,000 workers at the Puget Sound area's four biggest grocery chains still looms, although a contract deadline was extended from June 25 to July 9. Both sides agreed to meet with a federal mediator on July 6 and 7.

The central issue is the same as in the recent 141-day strike of grocery workers in California: Who's going to pay for health care? Mike Hatfield, an officer of the Food & Commercial Workers union, said the companies are demanding "to take away our affordable health care."

The four chains—Safeway, Albertson's, QFC and Fred Meyer—used to pay the entire cost of health care. Now they want the workers to begin paying \$3 a week for employee-only coverage and \$10 a week for family coverage. The workers would pay for 20 percent of medical costs and the companies would pay for 80 percent. New hires, however, would have to pay 30 percent.

The companies cite the rising cost of health care and increasing competition from chains that employ non-union workers—including Wal-Mart, Costco, Target, WinCo, Whole Foods and Trader Joe's—as reasons for their takeback demand. Workers at five locals are determined to defend their benefits. For more information, see www.protecthealthbenefits.org.

Writers conduct 'byline strike'

Writers at both the *Wall Street Journal* and *Barron's* held their first "byline strike" June 16 and 17 as part of an ongoing contract dispute with Dow Jones, which owns both publications.

Writers are contesting a huge hike in health-care premiums imposed earlier this year. The Independent Association

Service Employees support same-sex rights

Delegates to the annual convention of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have passed a resolution demanding same-sex marriage rights. The progressive measure by the union, which represents 1.7 million members and 120,000 retirees, follows adoption of similar resolutions by several of the union's locals.

The resolution, introduced by the SEIU International Executive Board, states: "This convention affirms SEIU's commitment to equal rights for all our members regardless of sexual orientation. SEIU will make it a collective bargaining and legislative goal to ensure that all members enjoy equal rights and benefits. SEIU will

support the right of same-sex couples to access the full and equal rights, responsibilities and commitments of civil marriage and oppose laws in constitutional amendments that deny that right. SEIU will resist any attempt by anti-worker forces to use this issue in elections this year or beyond to divide working people in order to elect candidates with proven track records of favoring corporate special interests at the expense of working families."

In June the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and the Office and Professional Employees International Union both passed anti-Federal Marriage Amendment resolutions

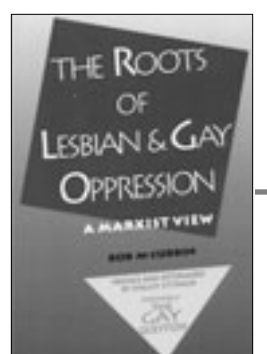
at their conventions, according to Pride At Work—the lesbian, gay, bi and trans constituency group affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

"Pride At Work," the group explains, "is committed to mobilizing mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) communities around organizing for social, racial and economic justice."

The Federal Marriage Constitutional Amendment, endorsed by President George W. Bush in an election year, will face a vote in the Senate in July. The measure, which aims to bar same-sex marriage on a federal level, "would make it impos-

sible for labor unions and employers to offer equitable benefits packages to all their members and employees," stressed a media statement by PAW. A full listing of unions that have opposed the Federal Marriage Constitutional Amendment is available at the Pride At Work website: www.prideatwork.org.

—Leslie Feinberg



BY SUE DAVIS

Is this superpower headed for a bust?

By Milt Neidenberg

of Publishers Employees, which is part of the Newspaper Guild, announced that byline strikes will continue if Dow Jones doesn't produce an acceptable offer.

Agencies sued for sub-minimum pay

How to stop restaurant, greengrocer and dry-cleaning company bosses from paying workers less than the minimum wage? Go after the employment agencies that supply the workers.

On June 15, the New York attorney general's office filed lawsuits against four employment agencies that send mostly Latin@ immigrants to businesses paying \$3 or \$4 an hour, far below the \$5.15-an-hour federal minimum wage. Nine other agencies are under investigation. Five others agreed to end their discriminatory practices and pay fines ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

"The exploitation starts with the agencies," Brian Barraza, president of the Association of Mexican-American Workers, told the New York Times. (June 16) "They send workers to jobs they say will pay more than the minimum, but the reality is when you go to work, you get less than the minimum wage. This is the best way to stop that."

The practice is widespread. For example, a six-month study showed that 87 percent of the 600 workers that Top Employment Agency in Queens, N.Y., sent to businesses were paid less than the minimum wage. And almost none were paid time-and-a-half for overtime.

The study showed that agencies also discriminate based on nationality, sex and age, and by charging commission fees that exceed 12 percent of the first month's wages.

NYC workers sue A&P

A lawsuit was filed June 23 in New York State Supreme Court by former A&P workers accusing the grocery chain of illegally denying them overtime pay and improperly deleting hours from employee time records.

The class action lawsuit represents hundreds of clerks, cashiers, bakers and other hourly workers at A&P and its subsidiaries, including Food Emporium and Waldbaum's.

Right to form unions

The annual survey of labor union rights conducted by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions confirmed what labor activists know in their gut: The United States routinely violates workers' right to form unions. And global competition is destroying workers' rights worldwide.

The report finds U.S. companies increasingly hire union-busting consultants to prevent workers from joining unions. Two of every five U.S. public-sector workers are denied basic collective bargaining rights.

(www.icftu.org/survey) □

Is the slot machine, roulette-wheel fever that has gripped millions of investors coming to an end?

Following the decision by the Federal Reserve Board (FRB) to raise interest rates to 1.25 percent, how will Wall Street and corporate America, brimming with profits, respond? And what does all this mean to the multinational workforce and the oppressed communities? As the outlook for an era of cheap money disappears, will the capitalist economic boom of the last two to three years turn into stagnation? Historically, such a stage has been called stagflation, a phase in the capitalist cycle leading to a bust.

Within days of the Fed's announcement, a July 6 Wall Street Journal article tried to answer some of these questions. Headlined "Climbing Interest Rates and Dwindling Demand Raise Worries on Street," the article said: "Wal-Mart Stores last week lowered its sales expectations for June, as did Target. On Thursday, U.S. auto makers reported huge declines in U.S. car sales for June."

And this, so important for workers: "Hourly wages for many workers fell behind inflation in five of the last six months through May." This confirmed the fact that, even before the FRB rate increase, inflation had gotten a foothold. Factory orders fell for the last two months, both nondefense and defense.

The job market outlook is troublesome and murky. Only a measly 112,000 new jobs were created in June, far below what is needed to sustain a growing labor market. "U.S. Job Growth for June Shows Steep Slowdown," was the headline of an article in the July 3 New York Times. The average workweek fell to 33.6 hours in June. "Casting the broadest pall over the state of the economic recovery, the total index of weekly hours worked in the private sector—which as a measure of all the hours worked by all the workers employed, provides a good gauge of the overall state of the economy—fell to 99.6 in June from 100.2 in May."

The multinational workforce and oppressed nationalities are poorer and more exploited. "Last month 8.2 million people remained unemployed and almost 22 percent of all jobless workers have been without work for 27 weeks or more." (USA Today, June 4) Household income has dropped and mortgages, credit card and other debts are higher than ever.

An unprecedented increase in productivity through speedup, privatizations, restructuring, outsourcing and technological innovations has forced workers into lower-paying jobs or into the streets, particularly people of color. The shift in the industrial workforce among the largest firms is the cause of the downturn that has depressed wages. Three years ago, Wal-Mart with 1.4 million workers displaced General Motors as the largest U.S. employer. General Motors, where the workers are unionized, pays an assembler more than three times the earnings of a non-union worker at Wal-Mart. (Labor Research Association, June 24) And that doesn't include health benefits, which are

inaccessible to Wal-Mart employees.

Happy days are here again?

How do Wall Street, the double-talking FRB chairperson Alan Greenspan, and the Bush administration view the unfolding crisis? The Wall Street Journal selected 55 optimistic analysts from Wall Street, hoping to allay the anxieties of millions of investors. Dianne Swonk, chief economist at Bank One Corp., spoke for the cheer-leading group and summed up their rosy forecasts of better times ahead: "Record profits, record cash flow, top-line revenue growth and order backlogs. You can't ask for more." (Wall Street Journal, July 1)

Greenspan sang the same tune. "The evidence accumulated ... indicates that output is continuing to expand at a solid pace and labor market conditions have improved. ... with underlying inflation still expected to be relatively low." And the Bush administration chimed in: "As the economy grows and jobs are created ... I think it's always expected that a rate increase would be part of that strengthening in the economy." (New York Times, July 1) Greenspan and the FRB are supposed to be above partisan politics and independent of Wall Street, but his remarks were an effort to calm the roiling waters, calculated to favor the Bush administration in this election year.

It is true that once upon a time happy days prevailed. The banks and other financial institutions had a field day for the last four years, when the discount rate charged banks by the Fed was 1 percent, the lowest in 45 years. A 2004 World Wealth Report, compiled by Merrill Lynch, reported that the "number of millionaires in the U.S. was up 14 percent." A spokesperson for the FRB said that "the nation's wealthiest 1 percent owned about \$2.3 trillion in stocks." (Wall Street Journal, June 15) The report didn't include how many millionaires became billionaires.

The concentrated paper wealth at the top—\$2.3 trillion—is only the tip of the iceberg. If you add investments in government securities, real estate, commodities markets and speculative trading in hedge funds, the total is indefinable. In the global foreign exchange markets alone, \$1.2 trillion changes hands daily. Cheap, accessible paper money saturated the global markets as well as the U.S.

A superpower buried in debt

There wasn't a borrower, including the government, that didn't have their hands out, sending the debt soaring to unprecedented levels. Bush even stole the equity in the Social Security Trust Fund, leaving tons of IOU's in its place. This obscene accumulation of paper wealth is leading to a capitalist crisis that has forced the FRB and Alan Greenspan to begin to tighten up credit. It's too little, too late.

The U.S. National Debt Clock is ticking away. As of July 1, the outstanding public debt was \$7 trillion, \$218 billion, \$337 million and thousands in change. The debt is growing at a rate of \$1.58 billion per day. The government can't pay its bills. It is running a hefty budget deficit of \$144.9 billion, equal to 5.1 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the 2004 first

quarter, thanks in part to the billions in tax cuts bestowed on the 1 percenters. Congress has imposed a debt limit of \$6.4 trillion, but that is far short of the actual \$7 trillion debt. Treasury Secretary John Snow should recommend to the Bush administration that it declare the government in bankruptcy—or at least in default.

The rising deficit in the U.S. current account has serious implications in the global markets. This broad measure of trade in goods and services, plus certain financial transfers, is of great concern to other governments that hold this huge dollar debt in their central banks. International investors, currency traders and others involved in the \$1.2 trillion a day global foreign exchange markets are also troubled. The U.S. balance of trade continues to run billions of dollars in the red, in spite of a cheap dollar that should favor exports. Will foreign investors continue to fund this huge debt through purchase of U.S. stocks and bonds, bank loans or some other forms of lending?

Inflation has now taken hold. Oil prices hover around \$40 a barrel and prices for food and other necessities are rising. There are too many dollars chasing too few goods and services in spite of a spike in productivity. Workers can't buy back the products they produce, as overproduction gluts the markets. Two-thirds of the GDP is determined by consumer spending.

Is another recession on the way?

Historically, easy money booms usually lead to busts. The Iraq quagmire is a significant factor in this possibility. The expenditure of almost \$200 billion for this imperialist adventure—and more is planned—is drawing on resources during this crisis of deficit spending. Wall Street is aware that the Iraq investments are not paying off in oil revenue or cheap labor. The \$400-billion military budget for the next fiscal year will aggravate the debt crisis. Economists are predicting a \$3.4-trillion budget deficit over the next decade, no matter who wins the election.

There is a growing split in the ruling class, a section of which is convinced the Bush administration is taking the U.S. superpower down the wrong road. Among the multinational workers and oppressed nationalities, there is a growing consensus to end the occupation and get the troops out immediately. Polls are confirming the sentiment, reflecting a desperate need for decent jobs, health care, education and housing. One poll taken in May shows only 29 percent rated the economy as good.

The poll confirms that the state of the economy has become unacceptable to a majority of workers.

The class struggle is sharpening and will continue to do so in the coming months and years. Strikes and mobilizations are too numerous to mention. There is a convergence of growing opposition to the endless imperialist wars and the war here at home on the multinational workers, the oppressed and the poor.

This is not an issue of Republican versus Democrat. Kerry at most has proposed a raise in the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7 over the next two years, and his position on Iraq is to get in deeper.

Both candidates represent a no-win situation for the workers and oppressed—and this is getting clearer to them by the hour. An independent, classwide struggle from the only class in society that produces the wealth and provides the services is breaking out. It can only change life for the better. □

The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression:

A MARXIST VIEW By Bob McCubbin

This ground breaking pamphlet was originally published as the Gay Question in 1976, during the first flush of the modern lesbian and gay movement. Its unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how lesbian and gay oppression developed.

WW Publishers Order from leftbooks.com \$6.99

WWP CANDIDATES SAY:

No to Bush lite, yes to an independent workers' voice

If Sen. John Kerry were the subject of a beer ad, it might go something like this: **"Bush lite—fewer promises, same bad taste."**

Let's get real. Democratic candidate Kerry is no savior of poor and working people. He's hardly a "lesser evil" at all. While the Democratic Party's voting base—people of color, women, lesbian/gay/bi/trans people, labor and other working-class people—is steadily moving in an anti-war, anti-corporate direction under the blows of the Iraq occupation and the economic crisis, Kerry is busily trying to drag everyone in the opposite direction.

What a difference 12 years makes. In 1992, then-Democratic candidate Bill Clinton promised a peace dividend, a massive jobs program, national health care, an end to the persecution of lesbians and gays in the military, and much more. Of course, he betrayed every single one of these promises when he came to office. Clinton's strategy was to pose as a progressive while carrying out the right-wing agenda of the capitalist ruling class for war, privatization and repression.

Fast-forward to 2004. John Kerry isn't even bothering to make those kinds of promises to get elected. He's openly pro-war and pro-occupation. He pays lip service to gay rights and immigrant rights, but opposes same-sex marriage and supports police roundups of immigrant families. Kerry and the Democratic leadership are counting on people's fear and anger at George W. Bush to override common sense and make them vote for their candidates, whose program is fundamentally the same as the current Commander-in-Thief.

It's no secret that Bush and the clique around him are dangerous. Millions of progressive people feel obliged to hold their noses and vote for Kerry in November to get Bush out. But the truth is, Kerry's goals are nearly indistinguishable from Bush's.

Kerry's support among Black, Latin@, Asian, Arab and Native voters is weak, and with good reason. Kerry has surrounded himself with a nearly all-white retinue. He either hasn't seriously addressed the issues of highest concern to the oppressed communities and other workers—like jobs, health care and education—or else he has taken an opposite position, like his support for the occupation of Iraq.

Kerry has given workers and progressive people plenty of reasons to oppose him.

- Trying to shore up support among Latin@s, Kerry addressed the National Council of La Raza June 29, promising a "comprehensive immigration reform bill in his first 100 days as president" for undocumented workers to get citizenship more easily. Hours later, he stabbed immigrants and Latin@s in the back.

- Speaking on the Telemundo TV network, Kerry said he opposed issuing drivers' licenses to undocumented workers, the same position taken by right-wing California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Even worse, he came out in support of the racist raids by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now part of the so-called Department of Homeland Security) that are terrorizing immigrant families from Texas to California. (Los Angeles Times, July 1)

- Also June 29, Kerry spoke at a meeting of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow/PUSH



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Workers World Party candidates at New York LGBT Pride March, June 27: LeiLani Dowell for Congress, Teresa Gutierrez for vice president, and John Parker for president.

organization, his first attempt to reach out to a Black civil rights organization. Kerry tried to ride the coattails of the 40th anniversary of the civil rights law of 1964, but the best promise he could come up with was a tuition tax credit for college students and a vague promise to give additional federal aid to states that keep tuition increases below the inflation rate. (Chicago Tribune, June 30)

If Kerry were serious about supporting the Black community, this would have been the perfect opportunity to announce a massive jobs-creation program to address the double-digit unemployment facing African Americans. But no. Not a word, either, about the heinous police brutality against Stanley Miller, a Black man, captured on videotape in Los Angeles. No apology for his support of the racist war of aggression against Iraq, or for the fact that he wants to keep U.S. military personnel—overwhelmingly working class and youths of color—in that occupied country indefinitely. No change in his position to send even more youths to kill and die in Iraq.

Earlier, Jesse Jackson complained that while he was prepared to campaign for Kerry, he had not been asked to. The truth is that Kerry doesn't want his campaign to be associated with the memory of the great civil rights struggles or any progressive movement, including Jackson's populist challenges to the Democratic Party mainstream in 1984 and 1988. Reverend Jackson, we have a proposal for you: Come and campaign with us, the candidates who embrace this legacy and are really fighting for jobs, peace and social justice!

Kerry has uttered not one word about the scandalous 2000 Florida elections that publicly exposed the disenfranchisement of thousands of African American voters. When members of the Congressional Black Caucus were seeking the support of just one senator to support their petition challenging the Florida vote that gained Bush the presidency, Kerry and the other 99 senators were nowhere to be found.

- Kerry is moving to assure the super-rich and the corporate monopolies that he will carry out their goal of world domination, only with more finesse and savvy than Bush. A new Kerry policy paper, reported in the July 2 Boston Globe, doc-

uments these aggressive plans that echo the current occupier of the White House. They include "forceful action" against Iran, full support for Israel's construction of a 425-mile apartheid wall to imprison the occupied Palestinian population, and a pledge to isolate Yasser Arafat and other Palestinian leaders.

Add this to Kerry's earlier threats to Cuba, Venezuela and other sovereign countries trying to remain free of U.S. domination. Add it to his June 29 pledge of support for the new U.S.-puppet regime in Iraq: "I believe it is critical that the president get real support, not resolutions, not words, but real support of sufficient personnel, troops and money, to assist in the training of security forces in order to be able to guarantee a rapid real transition, and most importantly, in order to provide adequate security on the ground."

Kerry's message is clear: more war, more money for the Pentagon, more body bags. Anyone feel a draft?

- The Democratic Party is moving to block candidates to the left of Kerry from getting on the ballot, even if they have successfully navigated the biased state laws designed to keep third parties off. On July 2, Ralph Nader, who is running a progressive reform campaign, accused Kerry and the Democrats of "dirty tricks" to keep him off the ballot in Arizona. Based on a minor technical error in the complicated petitioning process, the Democrats got a judge to invalidate 70 percent of the signatures gathered by Nader supporters and ban him from the November ballot. The pro-war Democratic leadership fears Nader will attract rank-and-file Democrats with his anti-war platform. (Associated Press, July 3)

These are only the most recent offenses. Don't forget that Kerry, who is from Massachusetts and who takes the lesbian, gay, bi and trans community's support for granted, opposes same-sex marriage rights. Don't forget that this former federal prosecutor voted for the USA Patriot Act and, unlike more than 300 cities around the country, has not demanded its repeal. Don't forget how he showed his contempt for the whole working class earlier this year when he willfully skipped a Senate vote on extending unemployment benefits. His vote would have passed the

Join us in Boston
July 25 for the National
March on the Democratic
Convention to Bring the
Troops Home Now

amendment; instead it went down to defeat, and millions of jobless workers have suffered.

What about Boston? This major city in Kerry's home state is the site of the Democratic National Convention, where he is expected to become the party's official nominee. Has Kerry done anything to address the pressing issues for workers and oppressed peoples there? No, he hasn't.

Kerry hasn't taken a stand against the racist forces, led by Mayor Thomas Menino and City Council President Michael Flaherty, who are trying to re-segregate the city's public schools under the slogan "return to neighborhood schools." With one call to Menino and Gov. Mitt Romney, Kerry could end the stonewalling that has prevented Boston school bus drivers and monitors, teachers, firefighters and others from getting a decent contract. All he would have to do is threaten to pull the DNC out of Boston. Instead the Democratic Party and Kerry campaign are putting pressure on the unions to accept a rotten compromise. So far, the unions are standing tough with community support.

No one should be surprised that the "progressive" Kerry is so indifferent to the struggles of people of color, LGBT people and union workers on his own turf. After all, Kerry is a wealthy member of the ruling class in that old-money state. His wife, Teresa Heinz-Kerry, is a billionaire and heir to the Heinz ketchup fortune. If Kerry becomes president, his family will be the richest ever to occupy the White House.

That's why workers need their own voice in this election, the Workers World Party election campaign: John Parker, an African American man from Los Angeles, for president, and Teresa Gutierrez, a Latina lesbian from Queens, N.Y., for vice president. We are two workers, two people of color, two socialists, two longtime fighters against war and for the rights of all poor and working people. We stand for everything Kerry does not: Immediate withdrawal of the troops from Iraq, abolishing the Pentagon, same-sex marriage rights TODAY, a massive program to create living-wage union jobs, and much more.

Join us in the streets of Boston July 25 for the National March on the Democratic Convention to Bring the Troops Home Now, sponsored by the ANSWER coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism). We'll be there, not to pressure Kerry to be more "reasonable," but to help expose him as the corporate stooge he is. We'll be there to join with all those who are organizing an independent fight-back movement. That's the best way to change the political climate, no matter who is in the White House.

**John Parker & Teresa Gutierrez
Workers World Party candidates
for president and vice president**

The anti-labor offensive, from Reagan to Bush

By Fred Goldstein

The “anybody but Bush” movement is looking to John Kerry to halt the shift in the rightward direction of politics in the U.S. The underlying assumption is that the right-wing program of the Bush administration is so qualitatively different from that of previous administrations that even those who voted for a third-party candidate during the contest between George W. Bush and Al Gore in 2000 must now retreat from their position and rush to vote for Kerry.

There are fundamental problems with this reasoning. First, U.S. politics have been moving sharply to the right without letup since the Reagan administration. This right-wing turn, which started gradually under Carter, was abruptly accelerated under Reagan because it reflected the general orientation of the ruling class.

It has been implemented uniformly by both capitalist parties since then, each carrying out this reactionary orientation in its own way. The Republicans, whose voting base is the big capitalists, the more reactionary sections of the middle class and the backward sections of the higher-paid white workers, carry out this policy more openly and directly. The Democratic Party, whose voting base is the progressive middle class and the progressive movement in general, the lower-paid workers—organized and unorganized—the urban masses and the oppressed people in general, carries it out in a more disguised and demagogic manner.

But while each party has a different voting base, and therefore has different political methods and at times even sharply different orientations, they both have long demonstrated their absolute allegiance to capitalism and imperialism. And they are tied in a thousand ways to the giant transnational corporations, the banks and the military-industrial complex that dominate ruling-class politics.

Kerry well connected

These ties to the ruling class are personified in John Kerry. His family's personal wealth is estimated at between \$700 and \$950 million. If he were elected he would be the richest man ever to be president.

His family fortune includes the Heinz empire—one of the largest food corporations in the world with global sales of \$9.4 billion in 2003. It exploits 48,500 workers directly in its employ. It has 22 factories in the U.S. and 57 factories abroad. It markets its products in over 200 countries and territories. It is number 206 on the Fortune 500 list. It is the quintessential transnational corporation with a global outlook on protecting the financial and corporate interests of U.S. imperialism.

Kerry himself is a trusted part of the capitalist political establishment. He has been in the millionaires' club called the U.S. Senate for two decades. He is a leading member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Communications Committee. As such he has been entrusted with the most secret and sensitive business of the ruling class. He is a member of the Democratic Leadership Council, which turned the Democratic Party sharply to the right in the wake of the two-term triumph of former President Ronald Reagan in order to adapt to Reaganism and the new right-

wing political order demanded by the ruling class starting at the end of the 1970s.

And while Kerry's wealth and upbringing might predispose him personally to be dedicated to preserving the imperialist order, it is not his wealth alone which is decisive in evaluating whether or not to vote for him. What is decisive is that the Democratic Party is an institution whose top leadership is beholden to the ruling class whose corporate interests are driving the turn to the right. The only way that the masses of people can turn the right-wing atmosphere around is by opening up a struggle, in the streets, in the offices, factories, campuses, communities.

Passively relying upon the capitalist political parties and the electoral process to improve the conditions of the people only gives the ruling class additional incentive to take more and more for themselves. So long as they can take away health care, housing, welfare, child care, and bust unions, destroy affirmative action, or go to war without fear of mass resistance and social instability they will continue their reactionary course.

Kerry will do it his way. Bush will do it his way. But they will both do it.

Sweeney and Kerry

Among Kerry's advisers is Warren Buffett, of the investment corporation Berkshire Hathaway. Buffett is the second-richest man in the world. Other Kerry advisers include John Corzine, former co-chair of Goldman Sachs & Co., a giant investment bank, and former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, the head of Citigroup.

But, shamefully, sitting alongside these millionaires and billionaires is John Sweeney, head of the AFL-CIO.

If anyone should know what this means, it should be organized labor. It is like taking poison for the working class to tie itself to the political leadership of the ruling-class parasites that live off the blood and sweat of the workers.

Sweeney is looking for the inside track to get the capitalist government to help arrest the slide in the labor movement. It is typical of the “anybody but Bush” syndrome.

The labor movement, the only classwide organization of the working class within capitalist society, was built up by the blood and sacrifice of generations of workers. Despite its numerical decline in the recent period, it is still made up of 13 million members and as such is in the most strategic position from which to launch the counterattack against the 25 years of Reaganite assaults on the labor movement and on all the social and economic gains of the masses.

Sweeney, by sitting as Kerry's adviser, is hoping to protect labor's interests from inside the capitalist establishment. But Sweeney should remember who he is sitting next to: the representatives of the very bankers and bosses who were behind the Reaganite union-busting attack on labor, who financed the vast corporate restructuring that threw millions of workers out of their jobs, devastated the industrial infrastructure, used technology to drive down wages, sent runaway plants overseas to oppressed countries and strongly undermined the labor union movement.

It should be clear to any labor leader who cares to look, that the orientation of

the capitalist state in the last 25 years has been one of unrestrained assault on the workers.

Quarter century of ‘Reaganism’

The most important legislation put forward by the transnational corporations during the Clinton administration, from a purely economic point of view, was the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The passage of NAFTA is regarded by the AFL-CIO as the biggest attack on labor since Reagan. Clinton defied his own party, many of whom rely on the votes of the workers, to twist arms and bloc with the Gingrich Republican leadership to get NAFTA passed by a handful of votes.

Clinton put the capitalist government fully behind the expansionary corporate needs of the transnationals and he put the interests of the labor movement on the chopping block. This allowed the ruling class to take maximum advantage of the scientific-technological revolution in communications and transportation to expand the corporate restructuring to Mexico and to ride roughshod over workers on both sides of the border.

On the other hand, the most important legislation put forward by the labor movement under the Clinton administration was the “replacement worker” bill. When the crucial bill, promoted by the labor movement, came up in Congress to stop the wave of corporate hiring of “replacement workers”—i.e. scabs—to break strikes and unions, Clinton behaved completely differently from his all-out, no-holds-barred struggle for NAFTA.

The bill was an attempt to stop what had been an illegal practice under New Deal labor law: the firing of striking workers and the hiring of scabs. It affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers and the security of the entire labor movement.

Clinton turned his back and quietly let the bill fail. It was a harsh blow to the workers, quite without fanfare, and it was an extraordinary political setback and embarrassment for the AFL-CIO leadership. The Clinton attack on labor was so harsh that even his mildly liberal secretary of labor, Robert Reich, quit in disgust.

New Deal and raw deal

The Clinton record has important implications for the “anybody but Bush” approach. What was Clinton doing? He was giving passive support to the state-backed, scab-herding movement openly and aggressively proclaimed by Reagan during the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike of 1981.

It was known by the Carter administration that the PATCO workers were under the extraordinary pressure of heavy workloads in tense situations. They were demanding improved working conditions. Carter knew this and stonewalled them. Thus, they endorsed Reagan in the 1980 election. Without the workers' knowledge, Carter drew up a plan to combat a possible strike when the contract ran out after the election.

Carter lost and Reagan took office. Reagan took to the airwaves to make a public threat to the workers that if they walked out he would fire them all. PATCO tried to uphold its position and walked out. Reagan gave the workers 48 hours to

Passively relying upon the capitalist political parties and the electoral process to improve the conditions of the people only gives the ruling class additional incentive to take more and more for themselves.

come back or be fired. He then fired 11,800 workers, took the unprecedented measure of barring them for life from employment, arrested the leaders of the union and hired scab replacements.

This act was a complete reversal of the fundamental rights of workers inscribed in the National Labor Relations Act and other legislation that was won during the Roosevelt New Deal. Through mass struggle, millions of workers had won the right to form unions, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.

Of course Reagan used the pretext that this was a government union that had no right to strike in order to justify his brutal treatment of the PATCO workers. But most importantly his open defiance of the AFL-CIO—which formally backed the PATCO workers—and his blatantly anti-labor proclamations, sent a signal to the bosses that this was a new day. Washington would do nothing to restrain them from scab-herding and would use the state to assist them where necessary. There were to be no more compromises with the labor movement.

Of course Reagan restructured the National Labor Relations Board, which was supposed to give the workers the mechanism to vote in unions, in a completely corporate direction. He appointed Ray Donovan, an anti-labor businessperson, as his secretary of labor.

In general, Reagan began the full-scale assault on the New Deal Era victories of the workers, at the behest of the bosses, as part of a broader attempt to rebuild the dominant position of the U.S. capitalist class at home and abroad.

When Carter planned the assault on PATCO, which he never got to carry out, he was already beginning the new orientation.

When Clinton destroyed the welfare system, forced NAFTA through, allowed the continuation of the assault on labor, and pushed through the Effective Death Penalty provision and “anti-terrorism” laws, he was continuing the reorientation of the ruling class and its state begun by Reagan. It is no accident that it was Clinton who declared “The era of big government is over.” Big government is a codeword for the New Deal and for the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson—which was forced to affirm civil rights, voting rights, desegregation and many other rights won in the struggle.

Should Kerry be elected, he would be subject to the same ruling-class discipline. The ruling class is oriented to world domination and attacks on the workers and oppressed. They may want to do it in a more measured and effective style than the Bush administration has demonstrated. But Kerry's position on the U.S. military occupation—of “stay the course” and send more troops—shows above all that he is completely in harmony with the ruling class. And this harmony will exhibit itself in domestic policy just as much as in imperialist foreign policy. □

War takes toll on GI mental health

By Dustin Langley

Psychological conditioning and exposure to the brutality of imperialist warfare is taking a heavy toll on the young women and men in the U.S. armed forces. Close to one out of five combat soldiers leaves Iraq with mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, according to a survey published in the July 1 New England Journal of Medicine.

The study found that as many as 17 percent of veterans who had been deployed in Iraq showed symptoms of PTSD, depression or anxiety. About 11 percent of those who served in Afghanistan had similar symptoms. These can include flashbacks, nightmares, sleeplessness and an inability to concentrate.

The numbers affected may be somewhat higher than the study shows. This is because the severely wounded and others removed from their units weren't included, according to psychologist Carl Castro and psychiatrist Charles Hoge of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, co-authors of the report.

The study also did not include National Guard and Reservists called up for duty. They had much higher levels of PTSD than active military personnel after the 1991 Gulf War, says psychiatrist Matthew Friedman, executive director of the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

As "stop loss" orders repeatedly extend tours of duty, experts predict that the situation will only get worse.

Dr. Matthew Friedman, executive director of the Veterans Administration's National Center for PTSD, said, "The amount of uncertainty and traumatic exposure has increased." As tours of duty

are extended, Friedman points out, the risks only go up. (USA Today, July 1)

Health officials say most of the soldiers with mental disorders are not getting treatment.

Racism: It's the drill

Intense demonization of "the enemy" is drilled into the troops, former Marine Chris White emphasized in his article "Why I Oppose the U.S. War on Terror." (Counterpunch, October 2002)

White pointed out that this military brainwashing of troops is crucial to war-time planners. "Before carrying out a security exercise in Qatar, my unit went through [anti-]Muslim 'indoctrination' classes. The level of racism was unbelievable."

White lists anti-Arab slurs the troops had drummed into them during this indoctrination. Along with racism, the officers also used anti-gay and anti-transgender characterizations of Muslim men.

Boston protest hits repression in Haiti

An emergency picket was held in front of the Haitian Consulate here on July 2 to protest the arrest of former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune. Neptune had served under President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He was arrested June 27 by the regime of Gerard Latortue, who was installed after the United States sent troops to Haiti and kidnapped Aristide in February. Many Haitians do not recognize the new regime.

The demonstration, called by the newly formed New England Human Rights

"The object was demonization through feminization and dehumanization, so as to make it easier for us to pull the trigger when ordered to," White said.

White, now a doctoral student in history at the University of Kansas, stressed: "You can't take civilians from the street, give them machine guns, and expect them to kill without question in a democratic society; therefore people must be indoctrinated to do so. This fact alone should sound off alarms in our collective American brain."

"If the cause of war is justified, then why do we have to be put through boot camp? If you answer that we have to be trained in killing skills, well, then why is most of boot camp not focused on combat training?"

"Why are privates shown videos of U.S. military massacres while playing Metallica in the background, thus causing us to scream with the joy of the killer instinct as brown bodies are obliterated? Why do privates answer every command

with an enthusiastic, 'Kill!' instead of, 'Yes, sir!' like it is in the movies?"

"Why do we sing cadences like these: 'Throw some candy in the school yard, watch the children gather round. Load a belt in your M-60, mow them little bastards down!' and 'We're gonna rape, kill, pillage and burn, gonna rape, kill, pillage and burn!' ... If one repeats these hundreds of times, one eventually begins to accept them as paradigmatically valid."

Rape: 'collateral' casualties

Women soldiers are paying an even higher price within their own units.

Female service members in the U.S. military stationed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait have reported more than 100 cases of sexual assault or misconduct by male soldiers.

Complaints have been filed against members of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

An inquiry conducted in 2003 by the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Iowa City, Iowa, found that 28 percent of the 558 female veterans surveyed had been raped or experienced an attempted rape during their military service.

The June 3 Washington Post noted: "These problems take a human toll. Dozens of veterans told the Post that being assaulted ruined their careers and sent them down a destructive path, including addictions and suicide attempts. Many carry the scar for life."

"When I looked at the American flag, I used to see red, white and blue," said Marian Hood, a veteran who was gang-raped. "Now, all I see is blood. ... The red represents the blood I've shed. The blue represents my bruises—the way my face looked. I was beaten and raped for my country. That should be enough."

Langley is a GI counselor with the Support Network for an Armed Forces Union. For information on discharges and other types of GI counseling, contact SNAFU at info@join-snafu.org.

Youth lead march vs. war & injustice

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Detroit

Detroit youths rose to the call for a march against war and injustice downtown on July 3.

During the demonstration, which began at Woodward Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., chants rang out calling for peace and social justice. The march proceeded to Grand Circus Park, where a host of young activists and artists spoke to the current situation in the United States and the need to end war.

Angel Hackett, a student at the University of Michigan, chaired the rally. "We are here to protest and to voice our opinions on the present state of affairs in this country as it pertains to the injustices at home and abroad," said Hackett.

She pointed out that the military budget is far higher than any area related to education, environmental affairs or social services for the poor.

High school student Angeles Meneses exposed how the cost of occupying Iraq led to health care and education funding cuts at home. She testified, "In my school alone, class sizes have gone from 25 per class in 2002 to possibly 45 per class in 2004/05."

Meneses continued, "As Cuba has proved, another world is possible."

"In Cuba, class sizes are cut to about 15 to 20. Education is being provided to everyone free of charge—including college. Every child with special needs is in



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

an appropriate school. The literacy rate in Cuba is 95.7 percent."

She concluded by sending "a message of solidarity to the people in Iraq, especially the children. The war is slowly devastating not only Iraq, but the United States as well. End the war in Iraq! Bring the troops home now!"

Other students spoke to the cutbacks in educational programs at their schools. Librarians, teachers, coaches, custodians, technicians and social workers are being laid off. At the same time the military budgets to carry out wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are increasing substantially.

Invincible and Blair performed an inspirational song on war and attacks against civil rights in the United States. Third Eye Open performed a spoken word song on the ironies of war in the Middle East and the many social injustices taking place in the United States.

The march was sponsored by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice. (www.mecawi.org) □



PHOTO: DEFENDERS FOR FREEDOM, JUSTICE & EQUALITY

Richmond march wants troops home

Over 1,000 demonstrators marched and rallied in Richmond, Va., July 3 to demand an end to the war on Iraq. The protesters called for real sovereignty for Iraq, bringing the troops home now, ending the occupations of Iraq, Haiti, Afghanistan and Palestine, and money for jobs and human needs, not war.

King Salim Khalfani, executive director of the Virginia NAACP, led the diverse and enthusiastic crowd in chants of "the only solution is the people's revolution" and "the only terrorists in the USA are the FBI and the CIA."

The march, nearly three miles long, stopped to hear speakers outside a right-wing daily newspaper, at the State Capitol, and at the offices of CACI International—a corporation under con-

tract to the U.S. government whose involvement in the horrendous illegal tortures at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq has been exposed.

Marchers received great support from people in cars—honks and shouts, fists raised and peace signs—as the march headed down Broad Street, the city's main drag.

The rally and march were called by the Virginia Anti-War Coalition. Endorsers included, among others, the Muslim Student Association of Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond ANSWER, Food Not Bombs, the Defenders for Freedom, Justice and Equality, the Progressive Muslim Network, the Richmond Greens, the Living Wage Campaign and the Unitarian Church. — Susanne Kelly

Façade of 'new' regime quickly crumbles in Iraq

By John Catalinotto

Each day Iraq's new government looks more and more like the old Coalition Provisional Authority under a different name. Every important decision and every hard security question is in the hands of the Pentagon and the U.S. Embassy.

One of the most important policing jobs is taking place 15 miles offshore. There an armada of Australian, British and U.S. warships is circling about the oil terminals at Khor al-Amaya and Al-Basra. In April, 24 people resisting the U.S. occupation came close to blowing up these terminals and depriving the new puppet government of its main source of revenue.

As if tempting fate, the U.S. commander of the Fifth Task Fleet, Captain Kurt Tidd, said, "We can't win the war here, but we can lose it in a flash."

Other U.S. commanders are sticking to the usual slow and agonizing ways of losing the war. From the safe distance provided by jet planes, the Pentagon bombed a home in Falluja that U.S. military spokespeople claimed was a "safe house" for members of a "terrorist network" run by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi of Jordan.

In U.S. war propaganda, al-Zarqawi is now playing the role formerly reserved for Osama bin Laden. That is, his group is blamed for every kidnapping, beheading and mass bombing, and all strikes said to be aimed at al-Zarqawi are presumably justified.

This latest one is the fifth such strike on Falluja in three weeks. Outraged Iraqis don't believe the U.S. military spokespeople. One neighbor at the scene of the

Falluja raid said, "A family of 10 killed in their homes—what's the reason for this? What are they looking for here? What kind of policy is this?" Personnel at hospitals in Falluja said children and women were among those killed by the latest U.S. air strike.

Iraqi "Prime Minister" Ayad Allawi, known to be a CIA operative, gave his blessing to the air strike in Falluja. At this rate, any residue of belief that he might be independent of the U.S. occupiers will quickly disappear.

On another front, the new government has lost ground regarding Moqtada al-Sadr and his militias. After the photo-op "turnover" on June 28, al-Sadr had announced that his Mahdi Army militia would obey a cease-fire with the new government and that he would enter the political arena. But on July 4, al-Sadr called the Allawi regime "illegitimate" and instructed his militias to "resist to the last drop of blood."

Al-Sadr's rise in popularity stems from his having led the April uprisings in Najaf and other southern cities against the occupation. While he is subject to pressures from many forces in Iraq, his strong words on July 4 demonstrate that his followers want to continue to confront the occupation and the puppet government.

Kidnapped Marine freed

According to the brother of Wassef Ali Hassoun, the U.S. Marine of Lebanese origin has been freed. A group known as Islamic Response Movement had reportedly held him since June 21, when his unit reported him missing. There had been

some confusion about his fate, as earlier reports on the Internet declared he had been beheaded.

In a statement on July 5, the IRM said he had been moved to "safety" after pledging to leave the military. If this version, reported by Reuters, turns out to be true, it shows a new development in the interaction between the rank-and-file U.S. troops stationed in Iraq and the Iraqi resistance. While certain elements in this case are special—this Marine was Arab and Muslim and could more easily communicate with his captors—it would show that it is possible for the resistance to win over U.S. troops to the Iraqis' just cause.

Already there have been examples of heroic refusal to fight from troops stationed in the United States. Marine Stephen Funk refused to report to duty. Camilo Mejia refused to return to Iraq. When U.S. troops in Iraq start to refuse to participate in this criminal occupation, even in small number, they will force the issue of a U.S. withdrawal onto the table.

This occurs as another report says that at least one in every six U.S. troops returning from Iraq duty is suffering from post-combat stress. New troops being rotated to Iraq from inactive Reserve status rightly feel they are being treated unfairly. It is no accident that movie theaters showing Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" in military base towns in the U.S. have been filled with crowds who applaud the anti-war film.

Saddam Hussein in court

The imperialist media has managed to demonize Saddam Hussein before much

of the world. But one appearance in a puppet Iraqi court was enough to convince the Bush administration that it had better not offer the Iraqi leader a public platform. In a short appearance July 1 he insisted he be addressed as "the president of Iraq," not the former president, and called the trial "a theater—Bush should be put on trial."

According to reports in USA Today on July 2, many Iraqis, whatever they thought of Saddam Hussein as a ruler, enjoyed seeing him giving hell to the U.S. and Bush. "If Saddam can continue to speak, people will call for his presidency again," architect Lauy Raad Mahmoud told the USA Today reporter. On Iraqi television, Hussein was seen but his words weren't broadcast.

Many people around the world think the U.S. leaders and their allies should be put on trial for war crimes. A series of hearings charging the "Coalition of the Willing" with such crimes have already been organized by the World Tribunal on Iraq in Mexico, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Sweden and the U.S., with more scheduled for Italy, India and a final session in Istanbul, Turkey.

The International Action Center is planning a day-long session in New York that will hear reports from some of these earlier sessions and additional evidence. It will be held on Aug. 26, on the eve of the Republican National Convention. This will be an opportunity to focus attention on the crimes of the imperialist powers, especially the U.S., during both the sanctions period and the war itself. □

Won't accept Bantustans or apartheid wall

Palestinians continue to resist Sharon plans

By G. Dunkel

The leaders of the Israeli state, and their U.S. financiers, are quietly congratulating themselves over a "victory." In the past four months the Palestinians have not mounted any military operations inside Israel. At the same time, the Israeli military has killed 205 Palestinians. All of the original leadership of Hamas has been assassinated.

But for all their boasting, they have not crushed the Palestinians' will to resist.

In Gaza, the Palestinians have been putting up stiff resistance. In the last week of June, they blew up an Israeli military outpost after digging a 1,000-foot tunnel to it. The explosion damaged the outpost and killed one Israeli soldier. The attack was quite a shock to the Israeli commanders.

Another shock came when the Palestinians started using new and improved rockets in late June to attack Sderot, a town in southern Israel. While they had used rockets before, the new ones carry a heavier payload, are much more accurate—and did far more damage. They even hit Sderot while Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was visiting.

The Israeli Army has been occupying the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, the source of the rocket launching, since June 27. On July 3 Israeli troops shot to death two Palestinian boys, aged 9 and 15, for throwing rocks, according to Palestinian medics.

Outside Jenin, a town in the northern

part of the West Bank, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which are allied politically to Yasser Arafat's Fatah Movement, shot an Israeli settler dead. Their statement said the shooting was a response to the killing of their West Bank commander in a raid in Nablus on June 26.

The Israeli military has not been able to completely crush the Palestinian economy, which is the real objective of setting up checkpoints. When the Israeli Army recently prohibited taxis and trucks from crossing at the checkpoints, members of nearby Palestinian communities started

providing pushcarts and dollies to transport heavy goods and people who couldn't walk. Wherever possible, they replaced pushcarts with horse-drawn carriages.

Moving goods through checkpoints became a growth industry, absorbing a lot of the jobless youths. The practical problems over prices and competition generally are settled collectively. This widespread activity shows the Intifadah's practice of getting through anything to anywhere, by any means possible.

It is not only an economic necessity. Strategically it is part of the mass resist-

ance to the U.S.-backed Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Resistance continues

Palestinians have endured two years of army assaults on the West Bank and Gaza, targeted assassinations of Palestinian leaders, mass arrests, harsh and arbitrary restrictions on movement, and construction of the apartheid wall. Progressives in the Middle East see these measures as part of a plan by Sharon, with full support from the Bush administration, to force Pales-

Continued on page 10

Issues were health care, war spending

Canada's Conservatives get election setback

By G. Dunkel

The June 28 election in Canada had an unexpected outcome. The Conservative Party lost, even though it was promising big tax cuts. But the other big business party, the Liberals, didn't win. They came in first, but don't have a parliamentary majority, so they will have to rely on the support of other parties to stay in power.

Stephen Harper, leader of the Conservatives, thought his victory was in the bag. He had united two contending conservative parties. And the Liberals, led by Paul Martin—an Anglophone representing a district in Montreal—were scandal ridden and

had formed the last three governments. Martin was running a lackluster campaign.

In addition to cutting taxes, Harper was planning to privatize health care. All Canadians are covered by health insurance administered by the provinces. He also proposed spending billions more on the military in co-operation with the United States, banning same-sex marriage, criminalizing the possession of marijuana and strengthening the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Canada also has the New Democratic Party, which has a social democratic program, and the Greens. The other major party is the Bloc Québécois, whose plat-

form is oriented towards independence for Quebec and runs candidates only in that province.

According to an analysis of the election by the Communist Party of Canada, "The two parties of big business were hammered by voters, falling from 80 percent of the total popular vote in 2000 to 68 percent in 2004. The Conservatives lost over 1 million votes ... and the Liberals dropped 300,000, mostly in Quebec. On the other hand, the parties seen by voters as defenders of progressive positions made gains; the NDP gained about 1 million votes, the Bloc Québécois about 300,000, and the Greens almost half a million." □



Hunger amid plenty

Getting enough food to ward off hunger has been the primary occupation of human beings since our species first evolved. Today, developments in agricultural science and the storage and transportation of perishables mean that everyone on this planet—all 6 billion of us—could be guaranteed an adequate diet, even in years when local crops may fail.

Yet, even though food production has been outstripping population increase, and even though obesity has become a major health problem in developed countries like the United States, world hunger is still growing.

It's not the fault of nature. It's because of capitalism. While there's plenty of profit in agribusiness, that's no guarantee that hungry people will be fed.

What is it about capitalism that is so irrational? Why hasn't the tremendous technological development unleashed by the profit system solved age-old problems like hunger, poverty, and disease?

It's not just greedy CEOs and managers—though there are plenty of those. The problem goes to the very root of the profit system.

Under capitalism, there's a disconnect between the objective need for something—its use value, as Marx called it—and what people who have money will pay for it—its exchange value.

Water may be absolutely necessary for life, but it sells for a lot less than vodka, which can make you drunk as a skunk but won't help much if you're stranded on a desert island. The price reflects how much labor goes into its production. In Marxist terms, water has a very important use value, but not much exchange value under usual circumstances.

The people in the world who have the most need for food usually have the least money to pay for it. They're often the people who have to work the hardest just to stay alive. They may have to carry water and fuel miles on their backs every day. They may spend hours with a hoe coaxing crops to grow.

There's a mistaken notion in the U.S.

that people get ahead by hard work. Unfortunately, the opposite is often true. The hardest-working people are often those who can never get ahead. They are thwarted because they don't control the vital arteries of finance and production that determine where the wealth goes. The development of imperialism, beginning in the 19th century, left the ruling classes of a few countries in control of world trade and investment. Except when revolutions have disrupted their plans, they've been running the show ever since.

Capitalist agriculture and related industries can be very productive, but they can also be destructive. The costs to society at large of rearranging nature may outweigh the benefits of some new technology, but big corporations have to always keep their eyes on the bottom line. If it makes a profit for the stockholders and owners, they do it, even knowing that there'll be hell to pay down the line. The overfishing of the oceans is but one example of this. Enormous factory ships have depleted some food fish almost to extinction. Another example is the health and environmental consequences of excessive pesticides.

Applying science to food production doesn't have to be destructive. It can be ecologically sound and based on taking the whole environment into account. In ancient communal societies, people made decisions about how and where to plant based on what they understood about nature, and often came up with sustainable methods of food production that didn't harm the environment. But, even though their knowledge was limited, they had something that has been robbed from us: everything was produced to satisfy the needs of the community, not to produce profit for a few.

World hunger amid plenty is just another reason why history is not over and the struggle for socialism goes on. This planet, so unique in the universe, is too wonderful to be the plaything of profiteers. It belongs to the people who live and work on it, and they will take it back—to satisfy the most basic needs: for food and the peace in which to enjoy it. □

Palestinians continue to resist

Continued from page 9

tinians to accept a separate state on the West Bank consisting of some scattered, discontinuous and impoverished Bantustans, and a Gaza Strip under the fist of Egypt.

Sami Abu Zuhri, the Hamas spokesperson in Gaza, told the British newspaper the Guardian: "Israel's security measures are very tight. ... It is very difficult to launch operations." (July 12)

Khader Habib, a founder of Islamic Jihad in Gaza, said similarly, "The number of operations has decreased, but that is for the time being, and the struggle is still alive."

Two years ago, at the beginning of Israel's counteroffensive against the Intifada, Jenin was almost completely destroyed in a thoroughgoing, vicious attack. Palestinians reported that hundreds of

innocent civilians were killed. On May 3, 2002, the group Human Rights Watch had to call for an investigation of the Israeli military's war crimes—even though HRW arose as a joint venture between billionaire George Soros and the U.S. state department, and even though HRW's executive director is a former U.S. prosecutor.

However, Tel Aviv, with the firm support of its Washington paymaster, was able to stifle an investigation.

Yet Jenin fights on. The Palestinian people are still fighting, on many different levels. While their resistance lives, while the Pentagon finds itself in a quagmire in Iraq, U.S. imperialism's aim to dominate the Middle East, which depends on Israel's stability, remains thwarted. □

Roots of Russian 'homosexual subculture'

By Leslie Feinberg

Revolutions against feudalism and capitalism in Russia illuminated the nexus of the battles for the liberation of sexuality, particularly same-sex love, the abolition of sex and gender restrictions, and the emancipation of women.

These seemingly divergent struggles were up against institutionalized common obstacles. The economic unit for both peasants and workers was the oppressive patriarchal family, whether feudal or capitalist. The superstructure of law, religion, politics and education functioned to justify the inequality of a class-divided economic base. And this economic and social injustice was enforced by the state machinery of repression.

Russian capitalism created an exploited economic class that was up against these common enemies at every turn and was forced to take on the Amazonian task of battling class rule, its ideology and its state.

Of course, women as a whole were easily visible in pre-revolutionary Russian society; they were not a "closeted" population. But it took the growth of capitalist industrialization to create a homosexual "subculture" in Russia.

As early as the 1870s, historian Dan Healey describes that "as Russian cities expanded and commerce and industry grew, a new, 'homosexual' identity appeared alongside more traditional relations." (Russian Queen)

Forensic doctors and others referred to these men as "tetki." The word literally means "auntie," Healey explains, but it can be translated as "queen." Tetka was a patronizing word used for any woman older than the speaker.

"The 'little homosexual world' (gomoseksual'nyi mirok) became a feature of Russia's largest cities," Healey says. (Homosexual Desire)

The abolition of feudal serfdom in 1861 and the demand for wage labor created by industrialization drew large numbers of peasants to the growing cities in search of paid work. It was this centrifugal force of capitalism in Russia that centralized an urban industrial class in the 1880s and 1890s, in which a homosexual subculture took root.

Healey writes that, as this subculture in large cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow began to grow in size and complexity at the end of the 19th century, "It developed its own geographies of sexualized streetscapes, its rituals of contact and socialization, its signals and gestures, and its own fraternal language. In these rituals, gestures and language, the subculture elaborated roles for participants, often based on the principles of the market in male sex." (Homosexual Desire)

At the same time, capitalist market relations stamped their own trademark on sexual relations. "This pattern of relations marked a distinct break with older, patriarchal forms of male sexuality, for encounters took place beyond the patron-client nexus of the household or workshop," Healey continues. "Now a sexual

marketplace evolved, with a new hierarchy of values and a new symbolic order." (Homosexual Desire)

"Indeed, capitalists were now taking the Russian tetka and his friends seriously, running bathhouses, bars and 'balls of woman haters' that catered discreetly to this clientele." (Russian Queen)

Healey adds, "Female homosexuals' (as Russian psychiatrists tended to call certain women who had sex with women) appeared in more scattered locations, often off the public stage, in the 1890s." ("Homosexual Desire")

Lesbian ♦ gay ♦ bi
and trans
PRIDE

SERIES
PART
7

**The weight of
the patriarchal
family**

Women bore the brunt of the burden of the patriarchal family structure in feudal Russia.

"Russian peasant society ... replicated the structure of the hierarchical patriarchal state," observes Christine D. Worobec. "Women and children found themselves subordinated to husbands and fathers just as peasants as a whole were subordinated to the tsar, the supreme father." (Late-Imperial)

The medieval family economic structure was a heavy yoke around the necks of all those who were not wealthy, landowning males.

Author William M. Mandel wrote: "Although the serfs were freed in 1861, they remained dependent upon and ruled by their former owners in precisely the fashion of the Black population of the American South after Emancipation." (Soviet Women)

These oppressive conditions generated resistance. In a mass trial of 50 peasants (Narodniks) in 1877, 15 were women. Mandel describes them as populists who "believed the solution to Russia's problems lay in that country's traditional peasant communes—freed, however, of landlord exploitation."

He quotes Sophia Bardina, a 22-year-old defendant, who spoke eloquently from the docket about the need to abolish the patriarchal class structure of the family. She told the court, in words laden with sarcasm, "Nor do I know whether the family is undermined by that social order which forces a woman to leave her family and turn to the factory where she and her children are inevitably corrupted, that order which compels a woman to become a prostitute because of her poverty and which even sanctions prostitution as a legitimate and necessary phenomenon in every well-ordered state; or whether the family is undermined by us who are striving to eradicate this misery, which is the principal cause of all social calamities, including the destruction of the family." (Soviet Women)

Mandel recalled that the Russian writer Maxim Gorky was beaten almost to death by Cossacks in a rural village after he tried to save a woman who was being dragged naked behind a horse because she was accused of the "crime" of adultery.

"That practice did not exist in town," Mandel concludes.

Next: Shaking the branches, not the trunk

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Why Hague court wants to silence Milosevic

By John Catalinotto

The NATO-created International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague took ominous new steps July 5 to restrict former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's right to represent himself. The ICTY used Milosevic's real health problems as an excuse to justify depriving him of his rights.

The following day the court ruled that his trial would resume on July 14, but that it would assign a cardiologist to monitor Milosevic's health in preparation for forcing him to accept assigned counsel.

Milosevic has been imprisoned for three years in The Hague in a place where the Nazis held resistance fighters. For two years he cross-examined some 300 prosecution witnesses. He was about to begin his defense case. Though he was to be restricted to 150 days in court, the former president was prepared to present a powerful case exposing U.S. and NATO crimes in his country and exonerating himself and the Yugoslav people.

Milosevic told the media and the court that he would never accept an appointed counsel and he insisted on continuing his own defense. "This illegal court is daring to judge biological and medical issues after they have proven incapable of judging legal and historical issues," he said. "This court is like the Inquisition."

Madeleine Albright, who was U.S. secretary of state during the 1999 U.S.-NATO war against Yugoslavia, was seen in The Hague at the ICTY building on July 5. Albright is known as "the mother of the ICTY." Supporters of Milosevic believe her presence is connected with the court's decision to postpone the trial and its attempt to change the rules.

Milosevic's long-time aide, Vladimir Krsljanin, said from Belgrade on July 5, "What we have seen at The Hague is the worst kind of political theater and legal outrage directed at the president. Slobodan Milosevic was brought to trial while he was suffering bad health conditions. Despite our pleas and complaints and the petitions of medical experts to the ICTY, it refused our demands for more time for preparation and rest for President Milosevic.

"First the court created conditions that worsened his health, and now they are using his ill health to justify stifling his presentation of his powerful defense case," said Krsljanin.

Changing the rules

The ICTY opened the prosecution case in February 2002 after a year of preparation. The well-funded and staffed court set its own rules for the proceedings. It allowed Milosevic to represent himself, as he insisted.

At that time, the ICTY and the media presented the Milosevic case as "the trial of the century." That's when the prosecution hoped to use it as a show trial to convict the Yugoslav leader and blame him and the entire Serb people for the wars in the Balkans.

Within the first month, however, Milosevic had so ably handled his political and legal presentation, and had so effectively cross-examined hostile witnesses, that many reporters had to admit the case against the Serb leader was weak to non-existent. Publicity on the case was damaging NATO's justification for the war.

Throughout the two years of prosecution that ended last February, President

Milosevic was plagued by high blood pressure and a heart ailment. Dozens of doctors pleaded for a more humane treatment of the president. The court delayed proceedings, but refused to release him from the harsh prison conditions or give him the medical care of his choice.

Though prosecutors took a year to prepare their case and two to present it, the ICTY allowed Milosevic only 90 days to prepare his defense and was to allow only 150 days for him to present it. Any time there is a delay for his health, the court refuses to allow him access to any papers or books or to interview potential witnesses at leisure. He lost 51 of the 90 days preparation when he complained of bad health.

As part of his defense case, Milosevic intended to call U.S. President Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and other NATO leaders as witnesses so he could charge them for the war crimes NATO committed against Yugoslavia.

He also planned to call a number of political analysts and activists who have written, spoken and organized against U.S. and NATO intervention in the Balkans. Some of these potential witnesses participated in the Peoples Tribunal on Yugoslavia organized by the International Action Center (IAC) in 1999-2000.

Faced with the embarrassment of a powerful political exposure of NATO and U.S. leaders, the ICTY, like a schoolyard bully who keeps getting beaten at his own game, decided to change the rules and refuse to allow Milosevic to defend himself.

One potential witness was Sara Flounders, a co-director of the IAC and an editor of the IAC book, "Hidden Agenda: the U.S.-NATO Takeover of Yugoslavia."

Flounders was scheduled to testify early. She met with Milosevic in The Hague on June 28.

Flounders told Workers World that "The attempt to remove President Milosevic as his own attorney is an admission of his innocence of the war crimes charges and of U.S. and NATO guilt in planning, executing and carrying out a 10-year war that broke up a strong and successful Yugoslav Federation into a half-dozen weak colonies and neo-colonies subservient to the United States and Western Europe.

"Just as the weapons of mass destruction have never been found in Iraq," Flounders continued, "the charge of massacres, mass graves and genocide proved to be an utter fabrication in Kosovo. It is essential that President Milosevic have a full opportunity to expose NATO's war crimes, to defend Yugoslavia and to answer these charges against his government."

IAC founder and former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark made himself clear on the issue of Milosevic's right to defend himself: "President Milosevic chose to 'defend himself in person,' a fundamental human right recognized by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights."

Tiphaine Dickson, an attorney from Canada who is assisting the International Committee for the Defense of Slobodan Milosevic, said, "Within the U.S., the Supreme Court has recognized this as a right under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution. To refuse to allow him this right would turn the already illegal ICTY hearings into a star-chamber proceeding." □

Report from International Caravan

In Colombia, union-busters come in the night

By Betsey Piette
Barranquilla, Colombia

As I sat in the electrical workers' union hall here on June 23, trying with my limited Spanish to follow a spirited debate taking place at a local meeting of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores, the biggest labor federation in Colombia, my eyes were drawn to a banner behind the stage. On it were sketches of seven men. I wondered who they were.

I later learned their names: Jose Luiz Martinez, student; Manuel Pajaro, worker and union organizer; Luis Mesa, teacher; Hermes Mercado, popular professor and union leader; Victor Miele, a member of the Sinaltrainal union; Roberto Maclean, student; and Adolfo Lambiano, union member. All were killed by paramilitary death squads, which operate with impunity throughout Colombia.

It turned out that the workers were debating whether to call a general strike each time another worker is assassinated.

Globalization's war against the workers has taken a heavy toll in this tropical city of 1.5 million people on Colombia's north-eastern Atlantic coast, an 18-hour bus ride over the mountains from Bogota, the capital. Over the past decade 68 union leaders, students, teachers and political activists from Barranquilla have been murdered.

In addition to those killed outright, resistance to neo-liberalism has been

answered with 210 reported death threats, 40 union leaders displaced from their homes and 50 others exiled.

At union halls we visited, photographs of slain members adorn the walls. Since 1986 almost 4,000 labor unionists have been murdered throughout Colombia—a majority of the unionists killed worldwide.

Only five people were convicted in any of these murders between 1986 and 2002.

Two days of testimony

Six members of the International Caravan to Colombia to Save Unionists' Lives were visiting Barranquilla. Our group included representatives from the United States, Britain and Spain. We spent two days hearing testimony on the crisis facing workers in this region.

Over 500,000 workers and peasant farmers have been displaced in this region of Colombia alone.

We heard from Corina Ochevarios. After killing her husband and sons, the paramilitaries drove this woman from her village.

A man who would not give his name told how people in his village were sickened from breathing dust from a coal mine owned by a U.S. company.

Three officers of the electrical workers' union, at whose office we were meeting, had been killed. Others had been arrested or received threats. Three months ago, in response to the union's protests and a campaign against the Free Trade Area of

the Americas, police occupied 11 branches of the public electrical company and locked out 600 workers.

Workers are forced to remain in their homes, since they can be fired if they don't answer their phone when the company calls. Meanwhile, they are not receiving salaries or any health benefits as the state moves to privatize the plants. Eight state-run electrical companies have been sold to Just Energy, a U.S. company.

A woman whose husband, a professor at the University of the Atlantic, was killed also declined to give her name for fear of retribution. Her husband had been organizing against corruption at the university when, in February 2001, he was shot in the face five times, at home in front of her and their children.

She noted that when a mayor connected with the paramilitaries was killed a few days ago, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe went on television to say he'd get the murderers "dead or alive." She wants to know why the authorities showed no such interest in finding her husband's killers.

Jesus Tovar, leader of the CUT in Barranquilla, presented statistics on human rights abuses in the region. He linked them to the drive toward privatization in the telephone, electric, water and health-care industries.

According to Tovar, companies first lay off union workers and subcontract labor. Ninety-eight percent of the work force is now on some kind of sub-contract.

Four hundred firms shut down from 1998 to 2000, affecting over 4,000 workers in Barranquilla. Privatization, concentrated in the service industries, has resulted in 800 workers being laid off.

Throughout Colombia 11 million workers are living on sub-minimum salaries of approximately \$300 a month, with no health care or social security. Meanwhile the cost of rent, water, electricity and phone service surpasses their wages.

In Barranquilla, 99 percent are without union representation. Public school education here is limited to five hours a day. Children often go without breakfast or lunch.

Tovar spoke of his personal situation. His mother, a union activist, was tortured and killed in 1992. His father, also active, was forced to flee to Venezuela.

After organizing a strike in 1971, Tovar was "blacklisted." He has had to move five times. Last year his shoulder and ribs were broken. Death threats were also issued against his wife and daughters.

But Tovar and his union brothers and sisters in Barranquilla and throughout Colombia are continuing to resist. They hold out hope for international solidarity from workers around the world who share a common class enemy and a common struggle.

Colombian workers are on the front lines in the battle against globalization and privatization, which is a life-and-death struggle for them. □

Kerry, Bush y el legado de Reagan

Por Fred Goldstein

La mejor manera de analizar la lucha de Kerry contra Bush es desde la perspectiva de la política capitalista estadounidense del último cuarto de siglo. Este período ha estado consistentemente caracterizado por una producción militar intensa y agresión en el exterior y por los ataques a los derechos económicos, sociales y políticos de las masas populares del país. Esto ha ocurrido en 8 años de administraciones Democráticas—10 si contamos los últimos dos años de Jimmy Carter—y 15 años de administraciones Republicanas.

Poniendo a Carter a un lado por el momento, este giro hacia la orientación derechista de los últimos 25 años, comenzó con la administración Reagan. Esta orientación no fue solamente el producto de un político derechista y de sus socios. Encontró un terreno fértil en la clase gobernante dentro de un marco de condiciones históricas muy específicas tanto en los EE.UU. como en el exterior, a finales de la década de los años setenta.

La administración de Reagan llegó al poder seis años después de que los esfuerzos por los Estados Unidos de conquistar a Vietnam fallaran. En el período de 1974 a 1979, los colonialistas portugueses fueron expulsados de Angola, Mozambique y Guinea-Bissau y hubo revoluciones en Etiopía, al sur de Yemen, Nicaragua, Granada, Irán y Afganistán. La Organización para la Liberación de Palestina cobraba fuerzas. Había insurgencia en El Salvador y Guatemala. Tropas cubanas usando equipos suplidos por los soviéticos vencieron los atentados por el régimen de Sur África de derrocar a la revolución de Angola.

La fuerza y el prestigio de la Unión Soviética y el campo socialista, el cual avanzaba económica y militarmente a grandes pasos, crecía en todo el mundo. Y la esfera de influencia imperialista de los Estados Unidos se contraía.

Aquí, la infraestructura industrial tecnológica de la clase gobernante era vieja y necesitada de reestructuración. El capital japonés y europeo sobrepasaba a los empresarios de aquí. La sobreproducción resultó en la caída de los márgenes de ganancias. El estancamiento económico, las altas tasas de interés y la inflación estaban ahogando la economía capitalista.

La clase gobernante de los Estados Unidos enfrentaba escoger entre adaptarse a las condiciones del nuevo mundo o lanzar un gigantesco ataque contra los trabajadores de aquí y del exterior. Esta fue la base clasista para el triunfo del reaganismo.

La tarea de Reagan fue la de preparar a los Estados Unidos para las aventuras militares en el exterior; detener a la URSS, al campo socialista y a los movimientos de liberación nacional; deshacer las concesiones económicas y políticas logradas por la lucha de los trabajadores durante el período de Roosevelt; y la de retomar los logros de los Africano-americanos y todas las nacionalidades oprimidas durante las décadas de los años cincuenta y sesenta como también los logros de las mujeres,

lesbianas, gays, trasgéneros y bisexuales que se lograron durante la década de los setenta.

Esta orientación agresiva surgió de la necesidad depredadora de la clase capitalista para rescatar su posición como explotadora dominante del mundo. Esta orientación no ha cambiado desde entonces y ha sido continuada por todas las administraciones, Demócratas o Republicanas, desde ese momento.

Bajo la administración de Reagan, el papel del estado capitalista como el salvaguarda de la propiedad privada y de la explotación cambió de la combinación de opresión con compromisos sociales y de clase a un asalto total por el estado contra todas las concesiones previas obtenidas mediante luchas.

Reagan y George W. Bush

La administración de George W. Bush, como la de Reagan en 1981, buscó llevar a cabo un asalto derechista tanto aquí como en el exterior. Así como Carter preparó el camino para Reagan llevando a cabo políticas vacilantes dominadas por concesiones tras concesiones a la derecha y al ejército, incluyendo un plan de \$1 billón para reforzar al ejército, asimismo Clinton preparó el camino para Bush con la misma clase de concesiones en el frente militar, de la salud, la beneficencia pública y muchos más.

Cuando Bush entró al escenario en enero del 2001, el régimen de Clinton y Gore ya había llevado a cabo una guerra brutal contra Yugoslavia, bombardeando hospitales, fábricas y un sinnúmero de instalaciones civiles. Ya había bombardeado a Irak, y bajo la presión de la derecha, dio el paso de convertir en política el cambio de régimen incluyéndola en una resolución congresional. Clinton ya había llevado ocho años de sanciones brutales y de bombardeos en la llamada zona prohibida en Irak, enviado proyectiles a Afganistán y a Sudán, y ya había incrementado el presupuesto militar.

El grupo Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz tomó las riendas con el propósito de demostrar la capacidad del ejército estadounidense de establecer la dominación absoluta sobre el mundo. Se meta inmediata era la de hacer retroceder a las pequeñas naciones que se habían liberado del imperialismo y después dirigirse a naciones más grandes como China.

Después de varios comienzos limitados—como el bombardeo a Irak, la violación del espacio aéreo de China con aviones de guerra, el retiro del tratado Anti-balístico firmado con la ex URSS, y otras acciones—se apoyaron en el desastre del 11 de septiembre para llevar la guerra a las puertas de Afganistán y de inmediato a Irak.

Además de todos sus errores de tácticas y de diplomacia, los cuales a la larga son secundarios, se encontraron con un factor fundamental que no podían vencer, aún con todas sus “correctas” tácticas militares y diplomáticas. Este factor es el deseo colectivo del pueblo de Irak de resistir la

ocupación colonial y el robo de su país por el imperialismo.

Por la resistencia del pueblo iraquí, la guerra de la administración de Bush se volvió en una aventura desastrosa. No solo falló en demostrar la capacidad del Pentágono y Wall Street de dominar al mundo, sino que también mostró las severas limitaciones de la superpotencia. Cuando tuvo que desplegar sus tropas para expandir su imperio en contra de una nación pequeña y pobre con una fuerza militar muy inferior—pero una nación cuyo pueblo está entrenado en el uso de armas, técnicamente hábil, y ferozmente antiimperialista—el imperialismo estadounidense manifestó su debilidad.

Lo que se suponía ser una demostración de fuerza intimidante, que aseguraría la segunda fuente de reserva de petróleo más grande en el mundo para los gigantes monopolios petroleros y prestar a Washington una influencia irresistible

estratégica en el centro del Medio Oriente, se ha vuelto en el primer gran atraso del avance imperialista de los Estados Unidos desde el colapso de la Unión Soviética en 1991.

Toda la clase dominante de los EE.UU. apoyó a la guerra, superando las reservaciones sobre el peligroso “unilateralismo” del grupo de Bush. Esta clase también aceptó la idea que EE.UU. iba a ser bienvenido como “libertador”. Todas las recientes críticas de los ofendidos medios de comunicación, que estuvieron “empotrados” con las fuerzas del Pentágono durante la guerra y fueron sus más entusiasmados aficionados, son un reflejo de las divisiones en la clase dominante porque están enfrentando un desastre en Irak. No pueden sobrepasar la discrepancia entre sus ambiciones imperiales y su incapacidad de controlar a Bagdad o Faluja después de 14 meses de ocupación sangrienta.

Después de haber provocado las manifestaciones antiguerra más grande en la historia durante el período antes de comenzar la guerra, la administración de Bush ahora enfrenta un sentimiento en casa aún más amplio y profundo en contra de la guerra y la ocupación. Las crecientes cifras de bajas, los escándalos de tortura, y los errores de cálculo, se han vuelto el tema repetido a diario en los medios de comunicación porque la clase dominante, y especialmente una proporción grande de los consejeros mejor preparados académicamente y el establecimiento consultivo político, está completamente desilusionada y consternada sobre la imposibilidad de poder anexar a Irak al imperialismo estadounidense. Una derrota en Irak no solamente sería una pérdida material inmediata para la clase dominante, sino que tendría un atraso estratégico importante que alentaría grandemente la lucha antiimperialista alrededor del mundo.

La identidad política de Kerry

Estas divisiones entre la clase dominante y los intentos interminables de inventar la mejor solución después de haber pasado

el hecho, están ocurriendo en el contexto de una campaña electoral por la presidencia y han conducido a una confusión enorme para las masas, que están más y más perturbadas por la guerra, las bajas de la guerra y los escándalos. Las masas quisieran acabar con todo esto.

John Kerry está corriendo por el Partido Demócrata, tratando desesperadamente de establecer una identidad política separada de la de Bush. La frase que haría esto clara y decisivamente sería: “Qué regresen las tropas a casa.” Sin embargo su posición frente a la guerra es exactamente lo contrario. Su posición es “Que cumplamos con la misión” y enviar 40.000 tropas más.

Sus argumentos con Bush sobre la guerra son exclusivamente sobre cuestiones de política del pasado. No hay diferencias básicas en su perspectiva para el futuro.

El objetivo estratégico de Kerry de “cumplir con la misión” en Irak es efectivamente igual a los objetivos de Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, el Pentágono, las empresas petroleras y los grandes monopolios de los EE.UU. Sus criterios críticos son enteramente de una naturaleza imperialista. El liderato del Partido Demócrata está completamente comprometido a salvar la situación allá.

En este momento, John Kerry está tratando desesperadamente de parecer amigo de las masas de trabajador@s, pobres, ancian@s y aquell@s sufriendo de las políticas favorecedoras de monopolios de George W. Bush. Aunque sus discursos son poco sustantivos, Kerry está sugiriendo que va a revertir la situación económica del pueblo, que se está deteriorando por todos lados.

Esta posición es tan fraudulenta viniendo de Kerry como antes vino de Bill Clinton, el último presidente del Partido Demócrata—quien prometió un programa de empleos y cuidado de salud para todos y en vez de eso destruyó el sistema de beneficencia social, destruyó el sistema de cuidado de salud, balanceó el presupuesto sobre las espaldas del pueblo y traicionó todas las promesas o insinuaciones de posiciones progresistas que hizo durante su campaña electoral.

El papel histórico de Reagan fue el de detener el declive del imperialismo estadounidense en el exterior y revertir los logros ganados por medio de luchas históricas en casa. Bush quiso seguir sus pasos al ultrajar los derechos de soberanía, autodeterminación y autodefensa de los pueblos liberados y profundizar los ataques contra los derechos económicos, sociales y políticos de las masas.

El pueblo iraquí ha asestado un golpe contra las ambiciones de Washington y el Pentágono de dominar al mundo. El pueblo aquí puede volver a ganar todas las concesiones que les fueron quitadas por la clase dominante, sus partidos capitalistas y su estado, no aceptando a un candidato burgués, sino resucitando los métodos de lucha organizada y militante que fueron las que produjeron las concesiones en el primer lugar. □

Segunda parte